

## 3.4 Housing and Neighborhoods

### OVERVIEW

The majority of Bee Cave's housing is relatively new, with nearly 80% of housing being built since 2000. The City has a variety of subdivisions and neighborhoods, including Bee Cave West, Falconhead, Falconhead West, The Grove, Homestead, Ladera, Meadowfox, The Uplands, and Wildwood in Bee Cave which are described in this section. Neighborhoods that are just outside of Bee Cave city limits include Barton Creek Preserve, Lake Pointe, Bella Colinas, and Spanish Oaks. A number of new residential and non-residential developments are also underway. Additionally, multiple vacant properties are being discussed as potential residential development sites.

### HOUSING VALUE / DEMOGRAPHICS

The median housing value in Bee Cave is extremely high and was reported at \$477,900 in 2014 with 90% of homes valued at over \$300,000 according to the 2014 ACS Census estimates. Bee Cave's median home value is greater than median home values in Austin (\$227,800) and Lakeway (\$368,900). Bee Cave does not have neighborhoods which are experiencing dis-investment or major decline, however there are some older, large lot subdivisions that are vulnerable to change and further subdivision into smaller lots.

In 2014, the City had an estimated 2,007 housing units, of which over 88% were occupied homes, 60% were single-family detached and 40% were attached or multi-family units. Over half of all units were owner-occupied (64%) and the majority of Bee Cave's households were considered family households. The Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) analyzes regional housing and transportation values as an indicator of affordability and economic health. Given the high housing values, owning a home in Bee Cave is only attainable for a small percentage of the Austin region's households, with median monthly housing costs (for homeowners with mortgages) estimated at \$3,077. Renting a home, however, appeared to be more affordable (median monthly rent was estimated at \$1,230/month in 2014) according to census estimates, though still higher than typical rental costs in nearby



Grove at Falconhead

### *Where are we now?*

- High housing and transportation costs.
- Most homes are either single-family detached units or apartment units.
- Lack of connectivity between neighborhoods and retail centers and other services.

### *What is our Vision?*

- Safe and livable, a hospitable hometown community of friends and neighbors.
- Balance in our array of residential and commercial land uses, in housing choices, in the capacity of our utility and mobility systems.

Austin. In addition, the City has seen many new multi-family complexes since 2013 come online, so the data on rental costs may be outdated. Recent data on rental homes currently show average rents over \$2,000 per month. In addition to high home values, the average annual transportation costs for the region are high due to typically long commute times and the lack of transit alternatives due to reliance on the automobile.

*“Throughout Bee Cave we see...quality, livable suburban and semi-rural settings, offering greater choice among neighborhoods and lifestyles...”*

### NEIGHBORHOODS

Bee Cave is made up of a number of neighborhood developments or subdivisions that are maintained and managed by individual HOAs, funded by homeowner fees / dues. The HOAs are responsible for many residential services and amenities including common open space and some recreation facilities such as playgrounds, signage, lighting, trash and recycling, and regular communication with residents. Many of the neighborhood developments have covenants that include architectural guidelines, landscape guidelines, and Best Management Practices (BMPs) for stormwater management. Figure 3-5 illustrates the existing neighborhoods in Bee Cave.

### PROJECTED HOUSING GROWTH

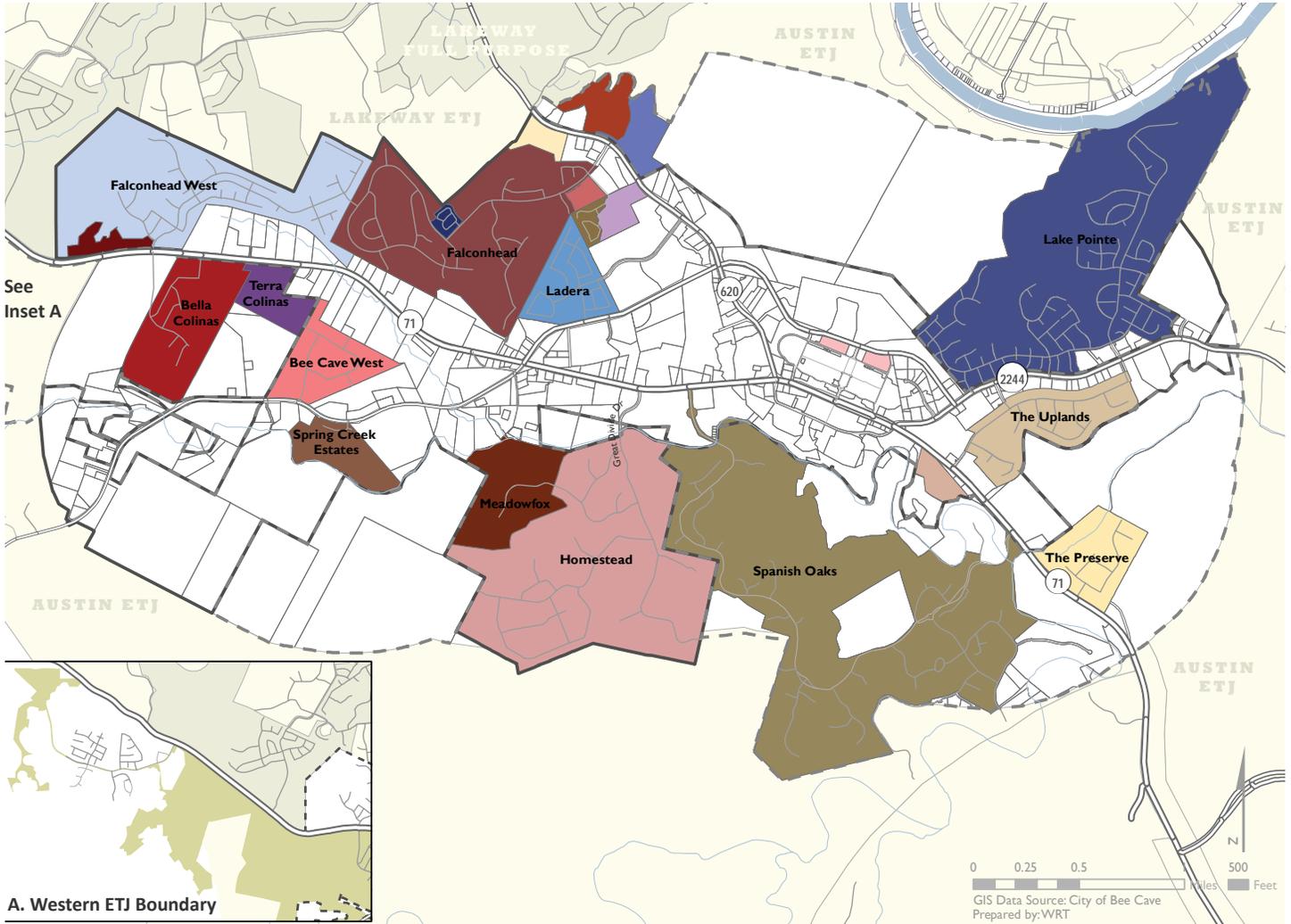
West Travis County includes some of the highest growth sectors in the Austin-Round Rock metro area and continues to show significant demand for new residential and commercial development. Based on the population and housing projections prepared for the West Travis County Public Utility Area (WTCPUA), Bee Cave and its ETJ are projected to grow by about 4,000 new units over the next 10-20 years, ultimately doubling in population and the number of housing units, based on estimates from 2014.

The Comprehensive Plan preparatory survey found that residents of Bee Cave strongly desire to preserve a “Small Town” and “Hill Country” character in their community. Residents reinforced that desire throughout the community input phases of the planning process. It will be important to create a balance between residential and non-residential growth and conservation of open space and the character as the City continues to grow. The Housing and Neighborhoods and Community Character elements each recommend strategies that will reduce the impact of development through design and clustering of housing units, scale and architectural character of housing, and conservation of tree canopy, views, and open space.



*Hillside at Spanish Oaks*

Figure 3-5: Bee Cave Neighborhoods



- Bee Cave Corporate Limits
- Other Jurisdictions' ETJ
- Other Jurisdictions' Corporate Limits

### Neighborhoods

- |                            |                     |                             |
|----------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Avanti Hills Apartments    | Falconhead West     | Spanish Oaks                |
| Bee Cave West              | Grove at Falconhead | Spring Creek Estates        |
| Bella Colinas              | Homestead           | Terra Colinas               |
| Canyonside                 | Ladera              | The Estates                 |
| Cielo                      | LakePointe          | The Grove at Spillman Ranch |
| Cottages at Spillman Ranch | Madrone             | The Preserve                |
| Falconhead                 | Meadowfox           | The Uplands                 |
| Falconhead Apartments      | Paseo at Bee Cave   | Wildwood                    |

\*While not defined on Figure 3-5, Hamilton Road residences are also collectively considered as a neighborhood that roughly follows the Hamilton Pool Road Corridor.

## **HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS & STRATEGIES**

### **Goal HN-1:**

Preserve the existing rural residential and “small-town” character of residential areas of Bee Cave and the ETJ.

The largest category of land use in Bee Cave is “large lot” or low-density single-family residential, making up 25% of total land area. Throughout the development of the plan, residents expressed their preference for the small-town, rural character of the City, as well as views of open spaces that represent the Hill Country character. Many of Bee Cave’s neighborhoods are characterized by large-lots, equestrian and walking trails, and attractive views that should be preserved.

- 4.1 Continue to limit density in rural / suburban areas of the City through zoning requirements for gross density (number of dwelling units per acre), maximum FAR, and setbacks.
- 4.2 Develop standards that permit and encourage conservation subdivision design in single-family residential zoning districts with a rural or large lot character to allow smaller clustered lots within existing gross density limits to protect and enhance open space, views, and environmentally sensitive features.
- 4.3 Preserve Hill Country views and tree canopy to the extent possible through standards for site design and placement of roads, housing units, and utilities.
- 4.4 Encourage home ownership and long-term residency in Bee Cave that is attractive to a range of household types and maintain a target of two owner-occupied for every one renter-occupied housing unit. Bee Cave is made up of a healthy mix of owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing units (the most recent census estimated that 64% of housing units in Bee Cave were owner-occupied compared to 35% renter-occupied). The majority of the City’s housing units have been built since 2000 and, in general,

most single-family homes are owner-occupied, while attached or multi-family units are renter-occupied. There are few options in housing types (other than single-family detached) for those interested in buying a home in Bee Cave.

- 4.5 Limit high costs associated with building new water and wastewater infrastructure and roads to serve currently undeveloped areas by promoting compact, contiguous development where possible.

### **Goal HN-2:**

Promote a variety of housing choices within Bee Cave and the region.

According to the most recent census estimates, about 60% of housing units are single-family detached and almost 30% are multi-family buildings with five or more units per building. There are however, few single-family attached, duplexes, or triplexes in Bee Cave. While the predominant housing type should remain as low-moderate density single-family, with a growing population of retiring, empty-nest baby boomers and millennials in one and two-person households entering the housing market, there is a need to continue to diversify the housing stock. There is a particular opportunity to encourage a mix of unit types, including apartments and townhomes within the urban corridors and Central Business District (CBD) where established neighborhoods will not be impacted.



*Multi-family housing under construction*



*Residential Neighborhood Street*

- 4.6 Encourage a mix of housing types and residential unit configurations that allow people to live in Bee Cave throughout their lives, at all stages of life with a range of housing options. Residential units should include the development of a range of options for senior housing, including smaller units to allow aging in place, shared housing arrangements to accommodate care-takers, active adult setting, independent living, and assisted living arrangements. The City should consider updating its list of permitted uses to allow accessory dwellings in a greater number of zoning districts.
- 4.7 Promote the development of mixed-use (residential above retail or office) and small-scale multi-family residential (2-3-4 unit townhomes/duplexes) within Urban Neighborhoods and Corridors, and within the Central Business District (CBD) areas of the City that complements the character of the CBD development.
- 4.8 Revise residential and mixed use zoning districts, as necessary, to ensure housing diversity is not hindered through required setbacks, parking requirements, or use restrictions. Through the City's review and update of development codes, Bee Cave should review parking minimums to ensure that parking is not unnecessarily built (e.g., senior units) and consider changes to permit condos, duplexes, and 3-4 family units in a greater number of zoning districts.
- 4.9 Work with surrounding communities and Travis County in addressing the quality, supply, and affordability of housing as a region.
- 4.10 Encourage the use of Low Impact Development (LID) practices through the site design process and improve energy efficiency in residential buildings. LID practices consider the siting of buildings, as well as the conservation and treatment of the environment through use of green infrastructure. (See also PFS 6.6). The City can provide information and best practices to residents and property owners about BMPs.

**Goal HN-3:**

Enhance Bee Cave's collective identity and cohesiveness so that separate homeowners association and neighborhoods see themselves as integral parts of the City as a whole.

While the City is made up of separate residential subdivisions managed by HOA's, Bee Cave's relatively small population and scale should make it possible to maintain a small-town feel at the citywide scale rather than an emphasis on the identities of individual (often gated) subdivisions. The development of trails, public open space, recreation, future schools, community services, and other "community linkages" should be seen as citywide enhancements that can bring the various neighborhoods together, while improving Bee Cave and fostering a sense of connectedness.

- 4.11 Develop community-wide programs, projects, events and celebrations that boost civic pride and bring neighborhoods together to improve Bee Cave as a whole. (See also ECE 8.7).
- 4.12 Improve connectivity within and between neighborhoods through implementation of the Hike and Bike Connectivity Plan and the Thoroughfare Plan. (See also FLU 1.8, M 2.7).
- 4.13 Promote the livability and image of Bee Cave through high quality design and the character of community facilities, neighborhood serving and regional retail, and employment areas. (See also CC 5.5).
- 4.14 Increase and enhance citywide parks, recreational facilities and activities, and community services to maintain a high quality and Level of Service as the residential population grows.